



To my Venerable Brother
The Most Reverend Timothy M. Dolan
President
United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ!

On this day my thoughts turn to the somber events of September 11, 2001, when so many innocent lives were lost in the brutal assault on the twin towers of the World Trade Center and the further attacks in Washington D.C. and Pennsylvania. I join you in commending the thousands of victims to the infinite mercy of Almighty God and in asking our heavenly Father to continue to console those who mourn the loss of loved ones.

The tragedy of that day is compounded by the perpetrators' claim to be acting in God's name. Once again, it must be unequivocally stated that no circumstances can ever justify acts of terrorism. Every human life is precious in God's sight and no effort should be spared in the attempt to promote throughout the world a genuine respect for the inalienable rights and dignity of individuals and peoples everywhere.

The American people are to be commended for the courage and generosity that they showed in the rescue operations and for their resilience in moving forward with hope and confidence. It is my fervent prayer that a firm commitment to justice and a global culture of solidarity will help rid the world of the grievances that so often give rise to acts of violence and will create the conditions for greater peace and prosperity, offering a brighter and more secure future.

With these sentiments, I extend my most affectionate greetings to you, your brother Bishops and all those entrusted to your pastoral care, and I gladly impart my Apostolic Blessing as a pledge of peace and serenity in the Lord.

From the Vatican, September 11, 2011

Benedictus PP. XVI